

Approved X

Interagency Human Trafficking Task Force  
Meeting Minutes for Victim Services Subcommittee  
Monday, May 13, 2012

Convened at 9:30 am

Members present: Katia Santiago-Taylor, Stephanie Decandia, Cherie Jimenez, Audrey Porter, Julie Dahlstrom, Tom King

Members absent: Not applicable

Additional participants: Blair-Victoria Dutra

Staff Present: Kimberly Henry, Nikki Antonucci

Introduction from Co-Chairs

- Delighted about opportunity to work together to collaborate on issues related to all survivors.
- Desire to address two tenets outlined in statute and any other goals set by subcommittee with objective of understanding and expanding services for survivors.
- This should be a working committee, and we welcome input from subcommittee members about goals and output.

Introduction of Task Force Members

*Including what goals the members have for the Victim Services Subcommittee*

Review of Two Tenets for Subcommittee

*Discussion of two express goals of Subcommittee related to identification of existing resources and examination of "safe home" needs for survivors.*

Tenet One: Resource List for Trafficking Survivors

*Desire to focus primarily on tenet one in first meeting given June presentation date to larger Task Force.*

- Who is the list for?
  - Purpose of the List: Need to determine the purpose of any list of resource guide. Are we recreating existing lists of resources or examining resources available to particular population? Desire to think more concretely about how the list will be used.
  - Need for advocates at SafeLink and other programs to have a list of programs to use with clients. However, difficulty of sending HT referrals to existing domestic violence and other programs given limited capacity.
  - Concern about having the advocate understand the woman's story prior to referring and unavailability of appropriate spaces for referral.
  - Suggestion that intake at Safelink or other location include a question about "trading sex for..." and concern about correctly identifying cases.
  - Question about whether want to recreate list of domestic violence resources if already exists or use this as an opportunity to examine gaps and lack of resources. Desire to think more critically about existing programs and how to build an ideal response to issue.
- What should the list include?

- What type of agencies are on the list? May want to list agencies that primarily deal with human trafficking cases rather than any agencies that have any potential contact with survivors.
- Who is listed? Should we list the general agency contact or particularly helpful contacts? Concern about listing particular people if staffing often changes.
- What is a list? List may not effectively capture all available services. Desire to create a smaller list of specific programs focusing on this issue. Advocates can still pull from existing lists (such as for domestic violence) for other potential service providers.
- Opportunity to examine gaps in services:
  - Discussion of general lack of services and primary victim service providers for labor and sex trafficking throughout Massachusetts.
  - May be a good opportunity to discuss unique challenges for this population and the fact that there are few programs specifically focusing on this issue. Emphasize that have some great programs that can serve as models but lack infrastructure and funding.
  - Concern about creating a resource list that will increase referrals without increased capacity. Suggestion of tracking the inability of current programs to meet need. Idea to use existing domestic violence programs as way of determining number of survivors not served. Existing providers at committee meeting are also tracking cases but having difficulty turning away clients even when stretched thin given lack of available alternatives.
  - Need to address the unique needs of different populations, such as adult women, children, boys, undocumented, and LGBTQ.
  - Desire to include other advocates working with labor trafficking and with boys in the conversation of the Subcommittee.
  - Use opportunity in June meeting to address existing services, needs of victims more broadly, and chart out the next steps for the subcommittee.
  - Gaps highlighted:
    - Services for minor victims of commercial sexual exploitation: Need for programs that take into account where girls are in the process. Lack of funding and available programs makes this difficult. Need for increased programming at group homes and for kids in DCF care. Concern that youth are leaving group homes without viable skills.
    - Lack of aging out programs: Girls are particularly vulnerable when aging out of systems and no available programs within or outside of DCF dealing with this population. Need to evaluate whether there is a model in the NGO community for how to effectively address aging out youth and particularly women.
    - Services for adult women survivors: Need for a comprehensive exit program that evaluates where women are and builds programming to address their unique needs. There are particular key factors that determine a woman's ability to effectively exit out of the sex industry, and we must listen to a woman's story and establish an effective exit program in Massachusetts.
    - Services for labor, LGBTQ, and boys: Great lack of services. Seek to engage with experts about existing programs and needs for these populations. Will invite to next meeting.

#### Tenet Two: Defining a "safe home"

*Desire to focus primarily on tenet one in first meeting given June presentation date to larger Task Force.*  
Define "safe home", what does it mean?

- What is a "safe home"?
- May be defined as an effective exit program that provides a wide variety of services - not just housing. Need more than a safe place to be.

- Concern about language of “safe home” that reinforces “rescue” when transition out of exploitation often is a long-term, non-linear process.
- Need for holistic approach that focuses on:
  - Structural- housing (building);
  - Relational- jobs, new support systems; and
  - Individual- have coping skills to change life.
- Particularly difficult for women to find shelter now because domestic violence shelters are closing doors to women. Limited space and must be intimate partner violence, which is often not involved in these cases.
- Need to evaluate whether different model for children and for adults.
- Difficulty for labor victims and boys to access domestic violence shelters, which means effective lack of shelter options for this population.

#### Things to remember:

- The sky is the limit! Recommend the ideal program!
- Prepare to present on:
  - Gaps;
  - What is needed;
  - How to measure success;
  - Identify programs open to having a pilot;
  - Rank important pieces to legislature;
  - Identify the bare minimum required;
  - People who need the most deserve the best;
  - Focus on provision of services.

#### Next Steps:

- Presentation in June 2012;
- Get presenters on other populations than girls: Boys, Labor, etc.;
- Consider what is available outside of Boston and whether other models to propose;
- Look at New York legislation for victim access to public benefits;
- Consider other group home models;
- Schedule monthly meeting.

Adjourned at 11:00 am

List of Documents and Exhibits Used by Subcommittee  
Meeting Notice/ Agenda

Next meeting: June 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM at FJC

Minutes submitted by: Blair-Victoria Dutra, Julie Dahlstrom